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BRIEFS ON INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM

1957

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INDICATIONS OF INTENSIFIED COMMUNIST
PARTY CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES

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INDICATIONS OF INTENSIFIED COMMUNIST PARTY
CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES

I. Introduction

1. Information available from a number of Western countries, as well as countries in the underdeveloped areas, indicates that in recent years efforts have been made by a number of Communist parties to improve their capabilities for clandestine activity. In a number of instances the parties engaged in this work are legal parties which have no reason to fear an imminent loss of their legal status. In other instances, these efforts are being made by parties which, while currently operating on an illegal basis, envision the possibility of legalization in the near future. The increased attention to clandestinity would not appear, therefore, to be inspired only by fear of repression, but rather by the tactical requirements of current aggressive programs in support of the general strategy of the International Communist Movement.
2. The unity of action campaign directed toward other "progressive" groups (Socialists, etc.) and the campaigns for national-front governments or "governments of national unity", which involve collaboration with nationalists, require Communist parties to take all possible overt steps to win acceptance by the groups and elements with which they seek to ally themselves. Reflecting tactical concepts elaborated first by Lenin and later by such prominent figures as Dimitrov during the United Front Period, 1935-39, Communist parties with well orientated and mature leaderships seek under such conditions to supplement and complement their overt actions with the efforts of their clandestine cadres. These elements working within the ranks of other groups or in governmental positions can prepare the ground for unity of action or permit a Communist party to accept an apparently inferior position in an alliance without running the risk of being dominated, absorbed, or undermined as a result of the alliance.
3. In a number of instances these clandestine cadres have been built up slowly against great difficulties over many years. In the case of one significant party, the cadre reportedly has grown from a mere handful of 50 such people in 1930 to a total strength in 1956 of 3,600 in government, the professions, and political parties and mass organizations.

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In other instances clandestine cadre, although still consisting of only a handful of people, is drawn from an equally small, educated national elite, and the positions they have attained over the course of years combined with their successful concealment of their status as individuals under Communist party discipline more than compensates for their lack of numbers.

4. While it is obviously impossible to discern or describe a general pattern, several factors indicate that particular attention should be paid to clandestine Communist party activities and purposes. There is evidence that increased use is being made of certain of the international Communist front organizations for Soviet intelligence purposes. For example, the Trade Union International (TUI) of Public and Allied Employees of the WFTU on 5 June 1956 sent out a questionnaire concerning government budgets; the replies allegedly were to be used as the basis for an article which would appear in the TUI's information bulletin. Special place was given in the questionnaire to the proportion of government budgets allotted for military spending. On 6 June the same TUI issued a questionnaire pertaining to the legal status of government employees. The interest a Soviet intelligence service would have in such matters in planning operations of deep cover agents is apparent. The answers to the questionnaire would be helpful also to Soviet staff personnel using Communist party penetration agents in government employ.

5. A United Action Committee to Win and Defend Trade Union Rights was set up at the founding conference of the TUI of Public and Allied Employees. The TUI attempts to present the United Action Committee as an independent group composed of both ICFTU and WFTU components. Actually the United Action Committee is purely an instrument of the WFTU-controlled TUI of Public and Allied Employees. In June 1956 it also issued a questionnaire containing approximately the same questions as that issued by the TUI pertaining to state laws which protected government employees--their trade union rights, etc. These questionnaires are somewhat different from other communications from the international fronts in carrying out "mass procurement of information" in that specific directives or conditions are attached: it is stated that some questions would be easy to answer and answers should be

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submitted immediately, whereas others would require more time and study and could be submitted at a later date. Raw reports are stated to be acceptable-- possibly an indication that the Soviets are interested in knowing the identities of the original sources of the information, as an aid to their recruitment.

6. The Soviet representative at the headquarters office of another TUI, who actually controls all activity of the TUI, is known to be especially interested in developing "worker correspondents" in the United States. He already has at least one of these who has reported on trade union matters in specific industries to the Secretary General of the TUI concerned. The latter turns all this information over to the Soviet representative.

7. A raid conducted by security authorities in a Latin American country in the latter part of 1956 against a local front organization disclosed that its offices were used as a storage place for forged identity cards. The ultimate use for which these were planned is not known, but an exposed Soviet espionage case in 1954 showed that one function of a local Communist network was to supply similar identity documents to the Soviet service.

8. Innumerable reports indicate that the offices and meeting places of some of the Soviet sponsored friendship societies serve espionage purposes. Attendants of reading rooms and libraries of certain of these societies are known to have acted as intelligence agents either for the Soviets or for another Iron Curtain intelligence service having its staff personnel under official cover as Cultural Attaches.

9. The extremely militant and aggressive tone of recent Soviet military publications may be an indication of GRU and KGB thinking. It is reasonable to assume that Moscow's heightened interest in Western military capabilities will be translated into an intensified espionage program which probably will have to be supported by the Communist parties. There is evidence that in some areas Communist party information procurement work against US Military installations and aircraft has been stepped up.

10. Another significant factor bearing on intensified clandestine activity is the firmly evidenced CPSU and, especially, CP China, training of CP leaders from certain Latin American countries. Selection, documentation, and travel

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of the trainees have been and are being handled, at least in notable aspects, on a clandestine basis. It is reasonably anticipated that the training will increase the clandestine capabilities of the trainees and their respective Communist Parties.

II. Organizational Elements of Current Clandestine Communist Party Operations

1. In view of the scattered indications which have been described above it may be useful to recapitulate the organizational forms of clandestine Communist party operations which have been observed during the recent period. These forms pertain to the offensive operations of the Communist party. They should not be confused with the organizational forms employed by the Communist Party when it is declared illegal. In the illegal as well as legal period the clandestine operations of the Communist party may be discharged by a variety of secret units more or less loosely coordinated.

2. A well-developed clandestine apparatus of a Communist party in the West probably will have all or some of the following elements--standard planning for Communist underground organization, would include them all:

a. the leadership, usually supplied by one or two high-ranking officers of the open party; plus an administrative bureau if the underground section is of sufficient size to warrant it.

b. a unit of secret party members either of professional background or having special qualifications. These individuals may occupy high-level government positions at regional or central level, or key posts in other political parties, labor unions or other large organizations. They are usually kept as a reserve to perform highly confidential tasks as needed by the party or possibly by Soviet intelligence and are directly under the administration of a headquarters unit of the party. Such groups existed in the United States in the period shortly after World War II as "pro-groups". Regional direction was provided by a pro-Council which was in direct contact with party headquarters in New York City--presumably with that unit responsible for underground members of this category. In countries where the

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parties enjoy a mass status, people of this category are of importance in effecting thorough infiltration and even covert control of non-Communist organizations and government agencies.

c. a central headquarters unit which directs fractions working within the rank of non-Communist mass organizations. Considerable information about Communist fractions working within the ranks of non-Communist organizations has been reported. The regulations are similar in all areas; variations which appear are attributable to the varying degrees of suppression under which each Communist party may find itself. Work in the fractions must be carried out by persons not generally known as Communists; fraction members must follow instructions provided by the fraction leader; they must try to infiltrate sensitive parts of the target organization; they must not show friendship or close connection with other members of the fraction; they must report to the Communist party any information they learn by membership in the target organization.

d. a military unit which will be responsible for propaganda work among armed forces personnel; for planning adequate supplies of arms and ammunition in time of political crisis; for exploiting any political disturbances to Communist advantage and to take over the leadership of any national rebellion against foreign "imperialism" or local reactionary authority; to plan and direct acts of sabotage. One KGB defector has stated that all sabotage action carried out by a Communist party will be under the ultimate direction of KGB. A recent report shows that two West European Communist parties intend to step up their sabotage programs. These are to include slowing down or halting of production of war goods, attempts to sabotage transport and delivery of such production, etc. Guidance for Communist sabotage work in these two countries is to be provided by a third Communist party. Possibly this apparent guidance from a Communist party claiming to have more experience in clandestine work will actually be provided by an agent KGB or GRU may have in the Communist party concerned.

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e. an intelligence unit which will be directed by one of the Party's highest ranking leaders who is in direct or indirect contact with a Soviet intelligence service. There is evidence in one non-Orbit country that intelligence directives requesting information of military nature are being issued by two District Committees of the Communist Party. In this country, and in others, there is evidence that information which would be of operational use to an intelligence service is being sought by means of questionnaires issued by the Communist Party. In some areas the intelligence unit may consist merely of one CP leader who acts as spotter for Soviet intelligence.

f. one or more technical units (or a "technical apparatus") which is responsible for maintaining a supply of safehouses, cover firms, documentation, escape routes, supplies of printing and mimeographing equipment, etc.

g. a finance unit--possibly a part of the technical apparatus--which will be responsible for funds received from foreign sources and for exchanging and distributing these funds as needed. Such a unit may be responsible for channeling and transmitting economic and political intelligence gathered through the Party's facilities to the local representative of Soviet Committee for State Security (KGB). A Soviet defector had testified that the Japan Communist Party (JCP) liaison contact who received funds from KGB was the same person used to transmit intelligence reports from the JCP to KGB.

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